

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A system for detecting and recording an image of an impact to an object, the system comprising: a) a sensor located to detect an impact at a corresponding surface region of the object and provide an output in response to detection of such an impact and b) an optical device having a field of view, the space adjacent the surface region corresponding to the sensor located within the field of view of the optical device, wherein the output provided by the sensor in response to detection of an impact initiates image capture by the optical device of the space adjacent the surface region corresponding to the sensor.
2. The system as in Claim 1, wherein the object is an automobile.
3. The system as in Claim 1, wherein the optical device is a camera.
4. The system as in Claim 1, further comprising a control unit that receives the output provided by the sensor in response to detection of an impact, wherein the control unit, upon receipt of the output provided by the sensor when an impact is detected, initiates image capture by the optical device of the space adjacent the surface region corresponding to the sensor.
5. The system as in Claim 1, wherein the sensor is one of an electrical, acoustic, piezoelectric, mercury and infrared switch.

6. The system as in Claim 1, wherein the system comprises a plurality of sensors each located to detect an impact at a corresponding surface region of the object and provide an output in response to detection of such an impact.
7. The system as in Claim 6, wherein the space adjacent the surface region corresponding to each of the plurality of sensors is within the field of view of the optical device, wherein the output provided in response to detection of an impact by one of the plurality of sensors initiates image capture by the optical device of the space adjacent the surface region corresponding to all of the plurality of sensors, including the space adjacent the surface region corresponding to the one sensor detecting the impact.
8. The system as in Claim 7, wherein the optical devices are cameras.
9. The system as in Claim 7, wherein the object is an automobile.
10. The system as in Claim 7, further comprising a control unit that receives the output provided by each of the plurality of sensors in response to detection of an impact, wherein the control unit, upon receipt of the output provided by one of the plurality of sensors that detects an impact, initiates image capture by the optical device of the space adjacent the surface region corresponding to all of the plurality of sensors, including the space adjacent the surface region

corresponding to the one sensor detecting the impact.

11. The system as in Claim 6, wherein the system additionally comprises a plurality of optical devices, the space adjacent the surface region corresponding to each of the plurality of sensors being within the field of view of at least one of the plurality of optical devices, wherein the output provided in response to detection of an impact by one of the plurality of sensors initiates image capture by the at least one optical device having within its field of view the space adjacent the surface region corresponding to the one sensor detecting the impact.
12. The system as in Claim 11, wherein the optical devices are cameras.
13. The system as in Claim 11, wherein the object is an automobile.
14. The system as in Claim 11, further comprising a control unit that receives the output provided by each of the plurality of sensors in response to detection of an impact, wherein the control unit, upon receipt of the output provided by one of the plurality of sensors that detects an impact, initiates image capture by the at least one optical device having within its field of view the space adjacent the surface region corresponding to the one sensor detecting the impact.

15. The system as in Claim 1, wherein the optical device is movable to position the field of view of the optical device so that the space adjacent the surface region corresponding to the sensor is located within the field of view of the optical device.

16. A method of detecting an impact to an object at an impact region, comprising the steps of:

- a) detecting an impact to an object;
- b) generating an output signal in response to the detection of the impact;
- c) initiating an image capture of the impact to the object in response to generation of the output signal of step b, the image capture being by an optical device having a field of view that includes the impact region.

17. The method of Claim 16, wherein the output signal is used to determine one of a plurality of optical devices that is used to initiate the image capture of the impact, the one of the plurality of optical devices having a field of view that includes the impact region.

18. The method of Claim 16, wherein the image captured is transmitted to a display device.